

Freshwater Fishing in Virginia

January 2005 – June 2006
Regulations and Information



Virginia Department of
Game and Inland Fisheries
www.dgif.virginia.gov

About the Department

Serving the outdoor public since 1916, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries continues to move forward with renewed vigor and an encouraging sense of accomplishment.

Fisheries annually stocks over 1.2 million trout into 500 miles of trout streams and raises 3–5 million warmwater fish for stocking in our other lakes and rivers. The Department owns and operates 39 public fishing lakes and manages the fisheries in virtually all major fresh waters of the state. That's over 176,000 acres in lakes and ponds, over 25,000 miles of fishable warmwater streams and rivers, and over 2,800 miles of trout waters. In order to provide access to these waters, the Department operates and maintains 222 launching ramps.

It takes work to maintain a plentiful supply of wildlife. Multiple wildlife projects are ongoing and hundreds of jobs happen every day that often go unnoticed. The Department maintains over 1,000 miles of road and keeps up with more than 5,000 informational signs,

along with 195,000 acres of land on 34 management areas that are kept open and in good shape for public use.

A big part of Virginia's wildlife abundance results from the work of the Virginia game wardens. Wardens annually check over 54,000 hunters, more than 75,000 anglers, and at least 30,000 boaters as they patrol over 3,000,000 miles annually.

All of this work to keep fish and game abundant in Virginia is paid for by the hunters, anglers, and wildlife enthusiasts themselves. The Department receives almost 100 percent of its funds from hunting and fishing licenses, boat titling and registration fees, state sales taxes from hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching equipment, and Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Funds from the sale of fishing and hunting equipment and motor boat fuel.

Be sure to buy your 2005 license before going fishing. Hope you have safe, and enjoyable fishing trips.

Below are addresses and telephone numbers for each of the five regional offices and the Richmond headquarters. If you need assistance, contact the respective office.

Richmond Headquarters

P.O. Box 11104, 4010 West Broad St., Richmond, VA 23230-1104

804/367-1000 V/TDD

To reach Law Enforcement after hours, call 804-367-1258.

Verona - Region 4

P.O. Box 996, 517 Lee Highway,

Verona, VA 24482

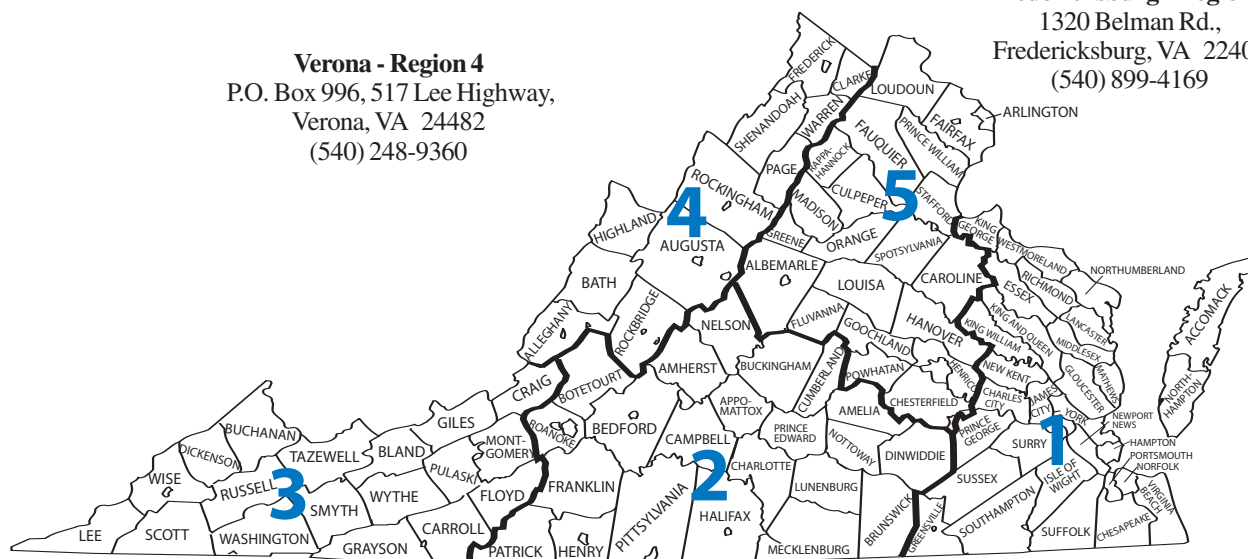
(540) 248-9360

Fredericksburg - Region 5

1320 Belman Rd.,

Fredericksburg, VA 22401

(540) 899-4169



Marion - Region 3

1796 Highway Sixteen,

Marion, VA 24354

(276) 783-4860

Forest - Region 2

1132 Thomas Jefferson Rd.,

Forest, VA 24551-9223

(434) 525-7522

Williamsburg - Region 1

5806 Mooretown Road,

Williamsburg, VA 23188

(757) 253-7072

Mission Statement

To manage Virginia's wildlife and inland fish to maintain optimum populations of all species to serve the needs of the Commonwealth; to provide opportunity for all to enjoy wildlife, inland fish, boating and related outdoor recreation; to promote safety for persons and property in connection with boating, hunting and fishing.

Commonwealth of Virginia

Mark R. Warner,
Governor

W. Tayloe Murphy, Jr.
Secretary of Natural Resources

Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

William L. Woodfin, Jr.,
Director

Members of the Board

Daniel A. Hoffler, Chairman
Cecil T. Campbell
Sherry Smith Crumley
C. Marshall Davison
James W. Hazel
Randy J. Kozuch
Will McNeely
John W. Montgomery, Jr.
Richard E. Railey, Jr.
Jack T. Shoosmith
Charles S. Yates

This pamphlet is for general information. Specific laws are found in the Code of Virginia or the Game Department Regulation Manual. For answers to specific questions about fishing, contact the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. See page 2 for the office nearest you.

This program received Federal financial assistance in Sport Fish and/or Wildlife Restoration. Under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility as described above, or if you desire further information please write to the Office for Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4040 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 300, Arlington, VA 22203.

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Cover: Photo from the 2004 Kids n' Fishing Photo Contest.



Virginia's Sport Fish Program and YOU

Anglers like you make it possible for Virginia to enjoy exceptional fishing and boating opportunities. Through the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program, you help the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and Virginia Marine Resources Commission make fishing and boating even better each time you buy a fishing reel, fishing lure, trolling motor, or gas for your boat.

When you buy fishing equipment or gas for your boat, a portion of the federal tax goes to the Sport Fish Restoration Program. Virginia annually receives about \$4 million of that money, which pays 75 percent of many of the fish management and boat access projects to improve your angling pleasure.

What's New for 2005

There are no fishing regulation changes for 2005, but please note new regulation process, license and fish consumption advisory information below.

Fishing Regulation Process/Booklet

- There is a new regulation process (see back cover) and because of this new process, this regulation booklet covers January 2005 – June 2006.

Licenses/Fees

- You can now buy one license that is good for freshwater and saltwater fishing. Check out the various combinations on page 5.
- The Nonresident Freshwater 5-Day Trip License is now \$10.00 instead of \$6.00 (see Nonresident Fees on page 5).
- There is now a \$1.00 per person fee to visit a state fish hatchery (fee paid at hatchery; see miscellaneous fees on page 5).

Fish Consumption Advisories

- The Health Department has lowered their PCB level for fish consumption advisories, so there are a number of new waters and additional species with advisories; please see page 18 for Web site and telephone information to obtain details.

Fishing License Information and Fees

Those Who Can Buy a Resident License Are:

- (1) persons who have been a bonafide resident of the city, county, or state for six consecutive months immediately preceding the date of application for license;
- (2) persons who have been domiciliary residents of the state for at least two months upon approval of a completed affidavit to be furnished by the Game Department;
- (3) legal voters in Virginia;
- (4) members of the armed forces if they reside in the Commonwealth and are on active duty and are stationed at military installations within, or on ships based in the Commonwealth;
- (5) students (including nonresident students boarding on campus) residing in Virginia who are enrolled in bonafide Virginia schools;
- (6) unnaturalized owners of real property in Virginia who have resided in a county for five years immediately prior to making application for a license may apply for resident licenses only in the county where they qualify.

Every person who is required to have a license must carry such license and shall show the license immediately upon demand of any officer whose duty it is to enforce the game and inland fish laws, or

How to Obtain a License

There are three ways to get your fishing or hunting license:

- **Online:** The quickest and easiest way is to buy your license(s) online. Simply select the licenses you want, pay with your VISA or Mastercard, and you're on your way! You print your license after you pay, so there's no waiting!
- **In Person:** Choose from hundreds of license agents located around the state.
- **By Mail:** Simply download the proper [form](#) and mail it to the address provided.

upon the demand of any owner or lessee, or any employee or representative of such owner or lessee, upon whose land or water such person may be hunting, trapping or fishing.

No state or county resident license to hunt, trap or fish in or on the lands or inland waters of this Commonwealth shall be deemed to be issued until the certificate printed on the reverse side of that license shall have been signed by the named licensee.

License Exceptions

All persons, except those listed below, must purchase the proper licenses before fishing.

- Resident or non-resident landowners, their spouses, their children and grandchildren and the spouses of such children and grandchildren, or the landowner's parents, resident or non-resident, do not need a license to hunt, trap or fish within the boundaries of their own lands and inland waters.
- Residents under 16 years of age (also do not need a trout license).
- Tenants, on the land they rent and occupy, are not required to have a license, but must have the written permission of the landowner.
- Guests fishing in individually owned private ponds.
- Non-resident children under 12 (except in designated stocked trout waters) when accompanied by a properly licensed adult.
- Legally blind persons.
- Any Indian who "habitually" resides on an Indian reservation or a member of the Virginia recognized tribes who resides in the Commonwealth is not required to have a license; however, such Indian must have on his person an identification card or paper signed by the chief of his tribe, a valid tribal identification card, written confirmation through a central tribal registry, or certification from a tribal office.

It is unlawful to fish on waters of any public or private club, association or preserve without a proper license.

Replacement License

If a license is lost, a duplicate license must be obtained at the place where the license was originally purchased.

License Fees

Licenses and permits valid from January 1–December 31.

A \$.50 issuance fee will be added to each license sold by license agents within the state.

Applications for **Lifetime Licenses** available on the Department's Web site under "Forms." at www.dgif.virginia.gov.

Resident Fees

To fish freshwater in county or city of residence * . . . 5.00

To fish freshwater statewide * 12.00

To fish freshwater and saltwater statewide* 19.00

To fish freshwater statewide for 5 consecutive days (not valid in designated stocked trout waters) 5.00

To fish freshwater and saltwater statewide for 5 consecutive days (not valid in designated stocked trout waters) 10.00

65 and over license to fish freshwater* 1.00

Service-connected totally and permanently Disabled Veteran resident lifetime license* to hunt and freshwater fish (available only through Richmond Office) 5.00

Totally and permanently disabled resident special lifetime license to freshwater fish *, (only available through Richmond office) 5.00

To fish in designated stocked trout waters (This license required in addition to other resident licenses if fishing in these waters) 12.00

Special lifetime to fish freshwater* or Special lifetime trout license to fish in designated stocked trout waters (A valid resident fishing license is also required), both available only through Richmond office. Fees for **each** lifetime license are as follows:

Age up to age 44 250.00

Age 45-50 200.00

Age 51-55 150.00

Age 56-60 100.00

Age 61-64 50.00

Age 65 and over 10.00

* A valid trout license (\$12.00 annual or lifetime) is required in addition to other resident licenses only if you are fishing in designated stocked trout waters.

Nonresident Fees

To fish freshwater statewide ** 30.00

To fish freshwater and saltwater statewide** 37.00

To fish freshwater statewide for 5 consecutive days ** . 10.00

To fish freshwater and saltwater statewide for 5 consecutive days** (not valid in designated stocked trout waters) . . . 15.00

To fish in designated stocked trout waters (This license required in addition to other nonresident licenses if fishing in these waters) 30.00

Nonresident special lifetime license to fish freshwater ** available only through Richmond office 500.00

Nonresident special lifetime trout license to fish in designated stocked trout waters (A valid nonresident fishing license is also required); available only through Richmond office 500.00

** A valid nonresident trout license (\$30.00 annual or \$500.00 lifetime) is required in addition to other nonresident licenses only if you are fishing in designated stocked trout waters.

Miscellaneous Fees

State Fish Hatchery Visitation Fee (per person fee, paid at hatchery) 1.00

Daily Permit required at Big Tumbling Creek, Crooked Creek, and Douthat State Park pay-as-you-go (fee) fishing areas (required in addition to regular resident, non-resident, or non-resident 5 day license) 3.50

National forest permit, if fishing in the National Forest this permit is required in addition to other fishing licenses [exceptions: senior (65 or older) and complimentary licenses] 3.00

County dip net permit to take shad, herring, and mullet . . 3.50

(Obtain licenses from some county circuit court clerks, city corporation court clerks and other authorized agents or call 1-800-986-2628.)

National Forest Permit

All persons required to have a license (except holders of a senior citizen or complimentary license) are required to have a National Forest Permit when fishing on National Forest lands except the North and South Fork of the Shenandoah River, Skidmore Lake in Rockingham County, North Fork Pound Reservoir, Lake Moomaw, the Jackson River below Gathright Dam, and in Wilson Creek below Douthat Lake in Alleghany and Bath counties.

Reciprocal Licenses

All reciprocal license agreements listed below refer to both boat and bank anglers.

Buggs Island (Kerr) and Gaston: Virginia or North Carolina state fishing licenses and permits are honored on those waters lying east of Brantly Steam Plant Dam on the Dan River in Virginia and the Rt. 360 Bridge on the Staunton River of Kerr Reservoir to the Gaston Dam on the Roanoke River, including all tributary waters accessible by boat from the main bodies of the reservoirs, or from the Island Creek subimpoundment. (**Note:** North Carolina regulations apply on North Carolina portions of these waters.)

Blue Ridge Parkway: Virginia and North Carolina licenses are honored on all Parkway waters. (**Note:** Virginia regulations apply in Parkway waters in Virginia except where noted herein or in federal regulations).

New River: Virginia or North Carolina state fishing licenses and permits are honored on the mainstream portion lying between the confluence of the North and South Forks of the New River in North Carolina (Alleghany County) downstream to the confluence of the New and Little Rivers in Virginia (Grayson County).

Potomac River: Virginia has reciprocal license agreements for three sections of the Potomac River, one above the District of Columbia and two below the District of Columbia. License requirements are different for these sections.

Upper Potomac River [above Little Falls (upper border with the District of Columbia) to the West Virginia border/state line]: Resident anglers with state freshwater licenses in Virginia or Maryland may fish the Potomac River and from both banks.

Middle Potomac and its Tidal Freshwater Tributaries (between Woodrow Wilson Bridge and Rt. 301): Valid Virginia freshwater (excluding County licenses), Potomac River Fisheries Commission, and Maryland Bay sport licenses are honored, including **Virginia tributaries** up to the following demarcation lines:

Accotink Creek: Rt. 1 Bridge
Aquia Creek: First bridge above Aquia Harbor Marina
Chopawansic: Rt. 1 Bridge
Chotank: Causeway
Dougue Creek: Rt. 235, Mt. Vernon Memorial Parkway
Four Mile Run: Rt. 1 Bridge
Hunting Creek: Rt. 1 Bridge
Little Hunting Creek: Rt. 1 Bridge
Neabsco: Rt. 1 Bridge
Occoquan River: Fall Line
Pohick Creek: Rt. 611 (Colchester Road)
Potomac Creek: Rt. 608 Bridge
Powells Creek: Rt. 1 Bridge
Quantico Creek: Rt. 1 Bridge
Unnamed bays and tributaries accessible by gas-powered boats.

Valid Virginia freshwater and saltwater (excluding county licenses), Potomac River Fisheries Commission, and Maryland Bay sport licenses are honored, including **Maryland tributaries** up to the following demarcation lines:

Anacostia River: downstream of Northeast Branch
Bridge at northbound lane of Alternate Rt. 1
Bladensburg Road, and Northwest Branch Bridge at southbound lane of Rhode Island Avenue.
Piscataway Creek: Downstream of Rt. 224 Bridge (Livingston Rd.)
Henson Run: Downstream of Oxon Hill Road Bridge
Nanjemoy Creek: Downstream of Rt. 6 (Trappe) Bridge
Port Tobacco Creek: Downstream of Rt. 6 Bridge
Mattawoman Creek: Downstream of Rt. 225 Bridge
Unnamed bays and tributaries accessible by gas-powered boats.

Lower Potomac River (between its mouth and the Rt. 301 Bridge): Valid Virginia saltwater (excluding County licenses), Maryland Bay sport, or Potomac River Fisheries Commission licenses are honored in the main stem. **In Virginia tributaries below 301**, Virginia freshwater and saltwater, and Potomac River Fisheries Commission licenses are honored.

Note: Maryland regulations apply for the Upper Potomac River and the Maryland Potomac River tributaries (call 1-800-688-3467 for current Maryland regulations).

Note: Potomac River Fisheries Commission regulations are enforced in the Potomac mainstem between the lower District of Columbia border and the mouth of the Potomac (call 1-804-224-7148 or 1-800-266-3904 for current PRFC regulations).

Waters between the Woodrow Wilson Bridge and Little Falls are controlled by D.C., and a D.C. fishing license is required.

Freshwater/Saltwater License Lines on Tidal Waters

Persons fishing upstream of the designated lines on the following waters must have a valid freshwater fishing license while those fishing below the lines must have a valid saltwater fishing license:

*Potomac River: Rt. 301 Bridge
Rappahannock River: Rt. 360 Bridge
Piankatank River/Dragon Run: The 1st set of power lines immediately upriver of Anderson Point
York River System (including the Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers): Rt. 33 Bridges
James River: A line connecting Hog Point on Hog Island (Surry County) and the downstream point of the mouth of College Creek (James City County).

Below these designated lines a freshwater or saltwater license will be valid on any tidal portion of any tributary entering the above mainstem waters.

The following waters are entirely freshwater and require a freshwater fishing license throughout: Meherrin River; Nottoway River; Blackwater River (Chowan drainage); Back Bay, Northwest River, and North Landing River and Intercoastal Waterway upstream to Great Bridge Locks; and Dismal Swamp Canal below (or South) of Deep Creek Locks.

*See reciprocal license sections on pages 5 and 6.

General Freshwater Fishing Regulations

Fishing in inland waters must be by angling with a hook and line or rod and reel. (See exceptions for nongame fish.) A hand landing net may be used to land fish legally hooked in all waters. Any person who fishes on another's property must have the landowner's permission to do so except on designated stocked trout waters along which signs have been placed indicating that the waters are open to public fishing. No species of fish, freshwater mussel or mollusk may be taken in inland waters to be sold, except under special permits provided by law. It is unlawful to use lime, dynamite or any other substances to destroy fish, or to cast or allow noxious matter to pass into watercourses that might destroy fish or fish spawn, or to deposit trash in streams or lakes or along their banks. It is unlawful to have more than the daily creel limit of any fish in possession while afield or on the waters. The daily creel limit includes live possession of fish. It is unlawful to stock any species of fish into inland waters of the Commonwealth without first obtaining written approval from the Department (private ponds excepted).



A.P. Hill Military Reservation, Caroline County. ©Dwight Dyke

It shall be unlawful for any person, while fishing, to remove the head or tail or otherwise change the appearance of any game fish (except bluegill sunfish and bream of the sunfish family) having a daily creel or size limit so as to obscure its species or render it impracticable to measure its total original length or count the number of such fish in possession. In addition, it shall be unlawful for any person to possess or transport such altered game fish while on the water. However, the prohibition against possession and transportation in the previous sentence shall not apply to the preparation of lawfully obtained fish for immediate use as food or any lawful commercial use of such fish.

It is unlawful to take, kill, capture, or possess any threatened or endangered species.

Virginia Game Fish

“Game fish” as defined by the Code of Virginia means and includes trout, all of the sunfish family (including largemouth bass, smallmouth bass and spotted bass, rock bass, bream, bluegill and crappie), walleye, white bass, chain pickerel, muskellunge, northern pike and striped bass.

Trout as Bait

Artificially raised rainbow trout may be sold as bait for use in the James and New rivers, and in impoundments (ponds, lakes, reservoirs), except impoundments listed as designated stocked trout waters, Lake Moomaw, and Philpott Reservoir. Persons possessing purchased rainbow trout for bait must have a valid invoice or bill of sale, specifying date of purchase, the number of trout purchased, and name of an individual or business permitted to sell trout.

Dam Regulations

Buggs Island: Mechanical lure launchers may not be used within 600 yards below Buggs Island Dam.

Walkers Dam: Only rod and reel and hand lines permitted within 500 yards below dam. It is illegal to snag fish at Walkers Dam.

Leesville Dam: It shall be unlawful to fish, attempt to fish, assist others in fishing, collect or attempt to collect bait while wading, or operating or anchoring any vessel in the waters of the Roanoke River from Leesville Dam downstream 840 feet to a permanent

overhead cable. However, fishing is permitted from behind safety railings of the Department’s Leesville Dam fishing structure.

Fishways: It shall be unlawful to fish or to collect bait from March 1 through June 15 within 300 feet of Boshers Dam Fishway on the north bank of the James River or within 150 feet of Harvell Dam Fishway on the south bank of the Appomattox River.

Free Freshwater Fishing Days

June 3, 4, and 5, 2005 have been designated as Free Freshwater Fishing Days in Virginia. No fishing license of any kind will be required for rod and reel fishing in freshwater except in designated stocked trout waters. For 2006, June 2, 3, and 4 will be Free Freshwater Fishing Days.

Department-Owned or Controlled Lakes, Ponds, Streams, or Boat Access Sites

A. **Motors and boats.** Unless otherwise posted, the use of boats propelled by gasoline motors, sail, or mechanically operated paddle wheel is prohibited at Department-owned or controlled lakes, ponds, or streams.

B. **Method of fishing.** Taking any fish at any Department-owned or controlled lake, pond, or stream by any means other than by use of one or more attended poles with hook and line attached is prohibited unless otherwise posted, in which case cast nets may be used for collecting nongame fish for use as bait.

C. **Hours for fishing.** Fishing is permitted 24-hours a day unless otherwise posted at Department-owned or controlled lakes, ponds, streams, or boat access sites.

D. **Seasons, hours and methods of fishing, size and creel limits, hunting.** The open seasons for fishing, as well as fishing hours, methods of taking fish and the size, possession and creel limits, and hunting and trapping for Department-owned or Department-controlled lakes, ponds, streams, or boat access sites shall conform to the regulations of the board unless otherwise excepted by posted rules by the director or his designee. Such posted rules shall be displayed at each lake, pond, stream, or boat access site, in which case the posted rules shall be in effect. Failure to comply with posted rules concerning seasons, hours, methods of taking, bag limits, and size, possession and creel limits shall constitute a violation of this regulation

E. **Other uses.** Camping overnight or building fires (except in developed and designated areas), swimming, or wading in Department-owned or Department-controlled lakes, ponds, or streams (except by anglers, hunters, and trappers actively engaged in fishing, hunting, or trapping), is prohibited. All other uses shall conform to the regulations of the board unless excepted by posted rules.

F. **Fishing tournaments, etc.** It shall be unlawful to organize, conduct, supervise, or solicit entries for fishing tournaments, rodeos, or other fishing events on lakes, ponds, or streams owned by the Department for which prizes are offered, awarded, or accepted based on size or numbers of fish caught, either in money or other valuable considerations. This will not prohibit events approved by the Department which are intended to promote youth fishing or provide instruction, provided no prizes, as defined above, are awarded and no participation fees are charged.

Special Regulations

Smith Mountain Lake

It shall be lawful to fish using only bait with a single point unweighted bait hook (no artificial lures allowed) in that portion of Witcher Creek in Smith Mountain Lake from behind the no wake buoy line at the mouth of the cove known as Cedar Key to the back of the cove from April 15 to May 31, both dates inclusive. A single point unweighted bait hook is defined as a hook that does not have a weight affixed to the hook. Any other weight must be attached to the line at least 12 inches above the hook (no weights below the hook).

Lick, Bear and Laurel Creeks

It shall be unlawful to use fish as bait or to use seines, nets, or traps to take fish in Lick Creek in Smyth and Bland counties, Bear Creek in Smyth County, and Laurel Creek in Tazewell and Bland counties.

Game/Sport Fish Regulations

Seasons

There is a continuous, year-round season for all freshwater game and nongame fish, with the following exceptions:

- 1) special times and limited closures for trout (designated stocked trout waters page 14, Trout Heritage Waters page 14, Blue Ridge Parkway page 14, and Pay-as-you-go trout waters page 16) and
- 2) certain seasons for special methods to take nongame fish pages 17 and 18.

Regulations for anadromous (coastal) striped bass above and below the fall line, in tidal rivers of the Chesapeake Bay; and anadromous (coastal) American shad, hickory shad, alewife, blueback herring, and all other saltwater fish below the fall line, in tidal rivers of the Chesapeake Bay, are set by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission. For more information call 1-800-541-4646.

Fall Line Defined: The Fall Line is defined as the following landmarks: Rappahannock River—Rt. 1 Bridge; Mattaponi River—Rt. 360 Bridge; Pamunkey River—Rt. 360 Bridge; Chickahominy River—Walkers Dam; James River—14th Street Bridge.

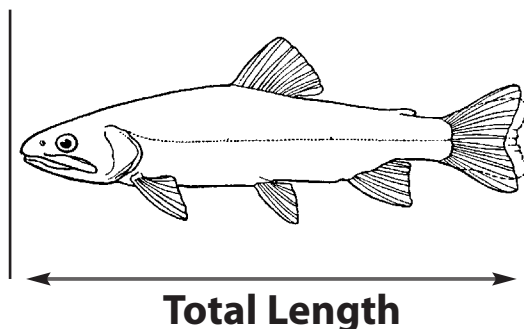


Catch-And-Release Fishing

It is often necessary to release a fish because it is too small, illegal to keep, or you just don't want to take it home to eat. In some cases, releasing fish unharmed is a conservation measure that will assist in helping to maintain and build population abundance and size. The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries encourages anglers who practice catch and release fishing to use a few simple precautions when doing so. Using the tips provided below will help to assure that the fish you release will survive to bite again another day.

- When catching a fish, play it quickly and keep the fish in the water as much as possible while handling. Avoid the use of a net in landing the fish and release it quickly to avoid exhaustion.
- Handle the fish gently and as little as possible. Do not put your fingers in its eyes or gills. Avoid wiping the slime or scales off the fish; this reduces their survival by making them more likely to develop a disease or infection.
- Remove hook promptly using needlenose pliers or a "hook out" device. If the hook is too deep or hooked in the stomach or throat, cut the line and leave the hook in. The hook will dissolve without harming the fish.
- Carefully revive the fish if it appears exhausted by holding it upright and moving it gently forward so water runs over the gills. Release the fish when it begins to struggle and is able to swim.
- Do not hold fish in a live well and later decide to release it. If you are going to release a fish, do so right away.
- With a little care and by following the guidelines set above, you can give released fish a better chance of survival.
- See the "Qualifying a Trophy Fish by Length and Photo" option for Trophy Fish Awards on page 39.

How To Measure a Fish



- Lay the fish on top of or beside a flat measuring rule.
- Do not lay the rule over the curvature of the fish's body.
- Close the fish's mouth and squeeze the tail lobes together.
- Measure from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail.

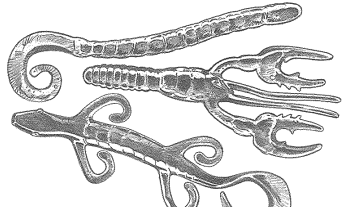
The tables that follow give statewide creel and length limits for major sport fish, and exceptions for major rivers and lakes. Regulations for many smaller lakes and boat access areas are posted on site, and posted regulations are in effect (see “D” under [Department Owned or Controlled Lakes, Ponds, Streams or Boat Access Sites](#), Page 7).

Type of Fish	Sub-type or Locations	Creel and Length Limit	Geographic Exceptions	Creel or Length Limits for Exceptions
Bass: largemouth smallmouth spotted		5 per day in the aggregate No statewide length limits	Lakes Lake Anna	No bass 12 to 15 inches
			Beaverdam Creek Reservoir (Loudoun County)	No bass 12 to 15 inches
			Briery Creek Lake	No bass 14 to 24 inches, only 1 per day longer than 24 inches
			Buggs Island (Kerr)	Only 2 of 5 bass less than 14 inches
			Chesdin Reservoir	No bass 12 to 15 inches
			Claytor Lake	No bass less than 12 inches
			Flannagan Reservoir	No bass less than 12 inches
			Lake Gaston	Only 2 of 5 bass less than 14 inches
			Leesville Reservoir	Only 2 of 5 bass less than 14 inches
			Lake Moomaw	No bass less than 12 inches
			Occoquan Reservoir from the reservoir dam upstream to the Lake Jackson Dam on Occoquan Creek and upstream to the Yates Bridge (Rt. 612) on Bull Run Creek	No bass less than 14 inches
			Philpott Reservoir	No bass less than 12 inches
			Quantico Marine Base waters	No bass 12 to 15 inches
			Smith Mt. Lake and its tributaries below Niagara Dam	Only 2 of 5 bass less than 14 inches
			Rivers Appomattox River – Brasfield Dam to Bevel’s Bridge on Rt. 602, Chesterfield County	No bass 12 to 15 inches
			Clinch River—within the boundaries of Scott, Wise, Russell or Tazewell counties	No bass 11 to 14 inches
			Dan River and tributaries downstream from the Brantly Steam Plant, Danville	Only 2 of 5 bass less than 14 inches
			James River – Confluence of the Jackson and Cowpasture rivers downstream to Rt. 220 Bridge near Lick Run, Botetourt County	No bass 11 to 14 inches



Type of Fish	Sub-type or Locations	Creel and Length Limit	Geographic Exceptions	Creel or Length Limits for Exceptions
<i>bass continued</i> Largemouth smallmouth spotted		5 per day in the aggregate No statewide length limits	<i>Rivers (continued)</i> James River— Rt. 220 bridge near Lick Run downstream, to Rt. 614 bridge Botetourt Co. Rt. 614 bridge downstream to the Interstate 95 bridge, Richmond	No bass 14 to 22 inches, only 1 per day longer than 22 inches No bass 11 to 14 inches
			New River—Claytor Dam downstream to the Va-WV State line and its tributary Little River downstream from Little River Dam, Montgomery Co.	No bass 14 to 20 inches, only 1 per day longer than 20 inches
			North Fork Holston - Rt. 634 bridge near Saltville, Va—Tenn state line	No bass less than 20 inches, only 1 per day longer than 20 inches
			North Fork Shenandoah - Rt. 42 bridge, Rockingham Co. downstream to the confluence with S. Fork Shenandoah at Front Royal	No bass 11 to 14 inches
			Potomac River - Virginia tidal tributaries above Rt. 301 bridge	No bass less than 15 inches from March 1 through June 15
			Roanoke (Staunton) River—and its tributaries below Difficult Creek, Charlotte County	Only 2 of 5 bass less than 14 inches
			Shenandoah River— Confluence of South Fork and North Fork rivers, Front Royal, downstream to the Warren Dam, near Front Royal Base of Warren Dam, near Front Royal downstream to Rt. 17/50 bridge Rt. 17/50 bridge downstream Va.—WV state line	No bass 11 to 14 inches No bass 14 to 20 inches, only 1 per day longer than 20 inches No bass 11 to 14 inches
			South Fork Shenandoah River— Confluence of North and South rivers, below Port Republic, downstream to Shenandoah Dam, near Town of Shenandoah Base of Shenandoah Dam, near Town of Shenandoah, downstream to Luray Dam, near Luray Base of Luray Dam, near Luray, downstream to the confluence with North Fork of Shenandoah, Front Royal	No bass 11 to 14 inches No bass 14 to 20 inches, only 1 per day longer than 20 inches No bass 11 to 14 inches

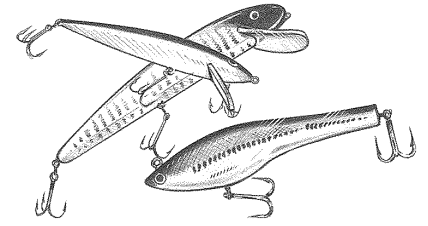


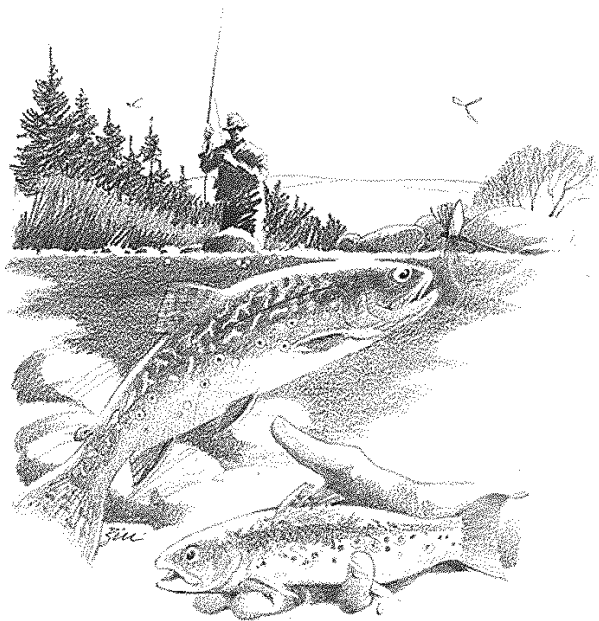
Type of Fish	Sub-type or Locations	Creel and Length Limit	Geographic Exceptions	Creel or Length Limits for Exceptions
Striped bass	landlocked striped bass and landlocked striped bass X white bass hybrids	4 per day in the aggregate no fish less than 20 inches	Smith Mountain Lake and its tributaries, including the Roanoke River upstream to Niagara Dam	2 per day in the aggregate
	anadromous (coastal) striped bass in all coastal rivers of the Chesapeake Bay	Creel and length limits shall be set by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission for recreational fishing in tidal waters		
	anadromous (coastal) striped bass in the Meherrin, Nottoway, Blackwater (Chowan Drainage), North Landing and North-west rivers and their tributaries plus Back Bay	4 per day No length limits		
White bass		5 per day No statewide length limits		
Walleye		5 per day	Flannagan and South Holston reservoirs	No walleye less than 18 inches
		No statewide length limits	Claytor Lake and New River upstream of Claytor Lake Dam	No walleye less than 20 inches
Sauger		2 per day No statewide length limits		
Chain pickerel		5 per day No statewide length limits	Gaston and Buggs Island (Kerr) reservoirs	No daily limit
Northern pike		2 per day No pike less than 20 inches		
Muskellunge		2 per day No muskellunge less than 30 inches		

Type of Fish	Sub-type or Locations	Creel and Length Limit	Geographic Exceptions	Creel or Length Limits for Exceptions
Bluegill (bream) and other sunfish excluding crappie rock bass (redestye) and Roanoke bass		50 per day in the aggregate No statewide length limits	Gaston and Buggs Island (Kerr) reservoirs and that portion of the New River from the Va.–NC state line downstream to the confluence of the New and Little rivers in Grayson County	No daily limit
Crappie (black or white)		25 per day in the aggregate No statewide length limits	Gaston and Buggs Island (Kerr) reservoirs and that portion of the New River from the Va.–NC state line downstream to the confluence of the New and Little rivers in Grayson County	No daily limit
			Flannagan and South Holston reservoirs	No crappie less than 10 inches
Rock bass (redestye)		25 per day No statewide length limits	Gaston and Buggs Island (Kerr) reservoirs and that portion of the New River from the Va.–NC state line downstream to the confluence of the New and Little rivers in Grayson County	No daily limit
			Nottoway and Meherrin rivers and their tributaries	5 per day in the aggregate with Roanoke bass No rock bass less than 8 inches
Roanoke bass		No statewide daily limit No statewide length limits	Nottoway and Meherrin rivers and their tributaries	5 per day in the aggregate with rock bass No Roanoke bass less than 8 inches
Trout		6 per day No fish less than 7 inches	See trout waters, pages 14–16	
American shad and hickory shad	in the James River above the fall line (14th Street Bridge), in the Meherrin River above Emporia Dam, in the Chickahominy River above Walkers Dam, in the Appomattox River above Harvell Dam, in the Mattaponi River and Pamunkey River above the Rt. 360 bridges, and in the Rappahannock River above the Rt. 1 bridge	No possession: (catch and release only)		



Type of Fish	Sub-type or Locations	Creel and Length Limit	Geographic Exceptions	Creel or Length Limits for Exceptions
continued American shad and hickory shad	below the fall line in tidal rivers of the Chesapeake Bay	Creel and length limits are set by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission		
	in the Meherrin, Nottoway, Blackwater (Chowan Drainage), North Landing and Northwest rivers and their tributaries plus Back Bay	20 per day No length limits		
Anadromous (coastal) alewife and blueback herring	in the James River above Boshers Dam in the Meherrin River above Emporia Dam, in the Chickahominy River above Walkers Dam, in the Appomattox River above Harvell Dam, in the South Anna River above the U.S. Rt. 1 bridge, and in the Rappahannock River above Embrey Dam	No possession: (catch and release only)		
	below the fall line in tidal rivers of the Chesapeake Bay	Creel and length limits are set by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission		
	in the Meherrin, Nottoway, Blackwater (Chowan Drainage), North Landing and Northwest rivers and their tributaries plus Back Bay	No daily limits No length limits		
Catfish	channel, blue, flathead	20 per day No length limits	All rivers below the fall line	No daily limit
	yellow, brown, black and snail bullheads	No daily limit No length limits		
Grass carp		No possession: (catch and release only)		
Other nongame fish		20 per day No length limits	Statewide	See pages 17–18 for exceptions
	Threatened and endangered species	No possession		





Trout Waters

Designated Stocked Trout Waters

“Designated stocked trout waters” will include those waters that are stocked with harvestable-sized trout and are listed by the Director in the annual Trout Stocking Plan. These waters will only be considered designated stocked trout waters from October 1 through June 15 (trout license required). A trout license is not required from June 16 through September 30. Trout angling hours on designated stocked trout waters are from 5:00 a.m. until one hour after sunset. See exceptions for Trout Heritage Waters (below), and Pay-As-You-Go Trout Fishing (page 16). Designated stocked trout waters are posted by the Department with appropriate “stocked trout waters” signs.

It is unlawful to fish in designated stocked trout waters after the daily creel limit of trout has been obtained or during the closed hours for taking trout. It is unlawful to feed, bait or snag trout in designated stocked trout waters. It shall be unlawful for any person fishing in designated stocked trout waters to use more than one rod, one line, and one baited hook (a treble hook is considered one hook); however, any combination of artificial lures is allowed. It shall be unlawful to use seines and nets in designated stocked waters, except that a hand-landing net to land fish legally hooked may be used in all waters.

Trout Heritage Waters

Trout Heritage Waters selected by the Director will be considered designated stocked trout waters, but will be closed to fishing on the Friday prior to the first Saturday in April and will reopen to fishing at 9:00 a.m. on the first Saturday in April.

Trout Stocking Information

The Department has provided a telephone number to call for trout stocking information. This recording is updated each day at 4 p.m. during the stocking season. The number is 1-434-525-FISH (3474). This information is also updated daily on the Department’s Web page.

Artificial Lure Definition

Artificial lure shall include manufactured or handmade flies, spinners, plugs, spoons, and facsimilies of live animals, but shall not be construed to include artificially produced organic baits and fish eggs that are intended to be ingested. Artificial lure with single hook shall mean any single point lure (with no multiple point hooks).

Special Trout Regulations

Jackson River: There is a 12-inch minimum size limit and 4 fish per day creel limit on trout taken from Gathright Dam downstream to the Westvaco Dam at Covington in Alleghany County. All trout less than 12 inches must be immediately returned to the water and no trout less than 12 inches may be in possession while fishing this section.

Blue Ridge Parkway: Fishing is prohibited from one half hour after sunset until one half hour before sunrise. No live or dead fish or fish eggs may be used as bait and digging for worms is prohibited. Special creel limits and other regulations for Parkway waters may be posted.

Shenandoah National Park: Only single point hook artificial lures may be used—no bait. The fishing season is all year. On those streams open to harvest, the creel limit is 6 trout per day with a 9-inch minimum size. On all other streams open to fishing, catch and release regulations apply. Contact the Shenandoah National Park at (540) 999-3500 for the annual list of streams open to harvest.

Reservoirs: There is a 16-inch minimum size limit and 2 fish per day creel limit on trout taken from Philpott and Moomaw reservoirs. Statewide size and creel limits apply to South Holston Reservoir.

Special Trout Stream Areas

Fishing in the following waters is permitted under the following regulations only:

- Only single point hook artificial lures may be used unless otherwise noted.
- No bait may be in possession while fishing these waters.
- All trout less than the minimum size must be immediately returned to the water unharmed. No trout less than the minimum size may be in possession while fishing in these waters.

Note: The special trout stream areas marked with an asterisk (*) on page 15 require a landowner permit. For further information refer to the Trout Guide in the January 2005 and 2006 issue of *Virginia Wildlife* magazine or contact your local fisheries office listed on page 2.

9-inch Minimum

Big and Little Wilson Creeks (Grayson County): That portion within the Grayson Highland State Park and the Jefferson National Forest Mount Rogers National Recreation Area.

Conway River (Greene and Madison counties): That portion of stream and its tributaries within the Rapidan Wildlife Management Area.

Little Stony Creek (Giles County): That portion of stream within the Jefferson National Forest.

Little Stony Creek (Shenandoah County): That portion of stream within the George Washington National Forest.

North Fork Buffalo River (Amherst County): That portion of the stream and its tributaries within the George Washington National Forest.

St. Mary's River (Augusta County): That portion of stream and its tributaries upstream from the gate near the George Washington National Forest property line.

Ramsey's Draft (Augusta County): That portion of the stream and its tributaries within the George Washington National Forest.

12-inch Minimum

Green Cove Creek (Washington County): That portion of stream from Rt. 859 downstream to its mouth.

Snake Creek (Carroll County): Upstream from its mouth to Hall Ford on Big Snake Fork and to the junction of Rts. 922 and 674 on Little Snake Fork.

Smith Creek (Alleghany County): That portion from the Clifton Forge Dam downstream to a sign at the Forest Service boundary above the C & O Dam.

Whitewall Laurel (Washington County): That portion of stream upstream from the first railroad trestle above Taylor Valley to the mouth of Green Cove Creek at Creek Junction and that portion of stream upstream from the mouth of Straight Branch to a sign at the Forest Service boundary just downstream of Taylor Valley.

16-inch Minimum, 2 Fish Per Day

***Buffalo Creek (Rockbridge County):** From the confluence of Collier's Creek upstream 2.9 miles to the confluence of North and South Buffalo creeks.

***Dan River (Patrick County):** That portion from Talbott Dam approximately 6 miles downstream to a sign posted just upstream from the confluence of the Dan River and Townes Reservoir.

Jackson River (Bath County): From the swinging bridge located just upstream from the mouth of Muddy Run upstream 3 miles to the last ford on Forest Service Road 481D.

Pound River (Dickenson County): That portion from a sign 0.4 miles below Flannagan Dam downstream 1.2 miles to a sign just upstream of the confluence of the Pound River and the Russell Fork River.

Roaring Run (Botetourt County): That portion from a sign at the third footbridge above the Roaring Run Furnace Day Use Area upstream approximately one mile to a sign at the Botetourt/Alleghany County line.

Smith River (Henry County): That portion of stream from signs below the east bank of Towne Creek downstream to the Rt. 666 (Trent Hill Rd.) Bridge crossing in Bassett, VA.

South Fork Holston River (Smyth County): That portion from a sign posted at the upper Jefferson National Forest boundary downstream approximately four miles to a sign posted 500 feet upstream of the concrete Dam at Buller Fish Culture Station.

20-inch Minimum, 1 Fish Per Day, Flyfishing Only

***Mossy Creek (Augusta County):** That portion of stream upstream from the Augusta/Rockingham county line to a sign posted at the confluence of Joseph's Spring.

Catch and Release Only

***Dan River (Patrick County):** That portion of stream and its tributaries between the Townes Dam and the Pinnacles Hydroelectric Powerhouse.

East Fork Chestnut Creek (Farmers Creek) (Grayson and Carroll counties): That portion of stream and its tributaries upstream from the Blue Ridge Parkway.

North Creek (Botetourt County): That portion of stream and its tributaries upstream from a sign at the North Creek Campground.

North Fork Moormans River (Albemarle County): That portion of the stream within the Shenandoah National Park.

Rapidan River (Madison County): That portion of stream and its tributaries (including Staunton River) upstream from a sign at the lower Shenandoah National Park boundary.

Roaring Fork (Tazewell County): That portion upstream from the southwest boundary of Beartown Wilderness Area.

South Fork Holston River (Smyth County): That portion of stream from the concrete dam at Buller Fish Culture Station downstream to the lower boundary of the Buller Fish Culture Station.

Stewart's Creek (Carroll County): Within the boundaries of the Stewart's Creek Wildlife Management Area.

Delayed Harvest Waters

From October 1 through May 31 fishing on the following waters is permitted under the following regulations only:

- Only artificial lures may be used.
- No trout may be in possession while fishing these waters.
- No bait may be in possession while fishing these waters.
- Trout license required October 1–June 15.

Note: During the period of June 1 through September 30 restrictions a. through c. above will not apply and these waters are like any other designated stocked trout water (see page 14).

Accotink Creek (Fairfax County): That portion of stream from Route 236 (Little River Turnpike) downstream 1.9 miles to Route 620 (Braddock Road).

Back Creek (Bath County): That portion of stream from the Rt. 600 Bridge just below the Virginia Power Back Creek Dam



Trout fishing, Big Tumbling Creek, Smyth County. ©Dwight Dyke

downstream 1.5 miles to the Rt. 600 Bridge at the lower boundary of the Virginia Power Recreational Area.

Chestnut Creek (Carroll County): That portion of stream from the Rt. 793 Bridge downstream 2.3 miles to the confluence with the New River.

Hardware River (Fluvanna County): That portion of stream from the Rt. 646 Bridge upstream 2.6 miles to Muleshoe Bend as posted.

Holliday Creek (Appomattox/Buckingham counties): That portion of stream from the Rt. 640 crossing downstream 2.8 miles to a sign at the headwaters of Holliday Lake.

Holmes Run (Fairfax County): That portion of stream from the Lake Barcroft Dam downstream 1.2 miles to a sign posted at the Alexandria City line.

North Fork of Pound and Pound rivers (Wise County): That portion of the streams from the base of North Fork of Pound Dam downstream to the confluence with Indian Creek.

North River (Augusta County): That portion of stream from the base of Elkhorn Dam downstream 1.5 miles to a sign posted at the head of Staunton City Reservoir.

Passage Creek (Warren County): That portion of stream from the lower boundary of the Front Royal State Hatchery upstream 0.9 miles to the Shenandoah/Warren County line.

Pedlar River (Amherst County): That portion of stream from the City of Lynchburg/George Washington National Forest boundary line (below Lynchburg Reservoir) downstream 2.7 miles to the boundary line of the George Washington National Forest.

Roanoke River (Roanoke County): That portion of stream from the Rt. 760 Bridge (Diuguide Lane) upstream 1.0 miles to a sign posted at the upper end of Green Hill Park.

Roanoke River (City of Salem): That portion of stream from the Rt. 419 Bridge upstream 2.2 miles to the Colorado Street Bridge.

South River (Augusta County): That portion of stream from Second Street Bridge upstream 2.4 miles to the base of Rife Loth Dam in the City of Waynesboro.

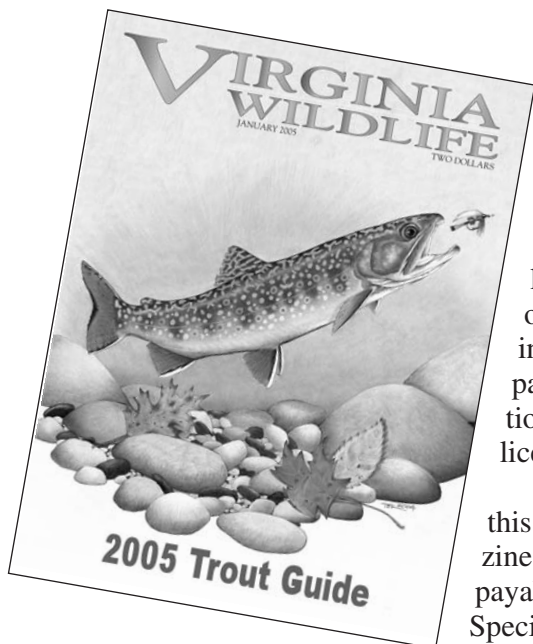
Pay-As-You-Go Trout Fishing

These waters are stocked regularly with catchable trout throughout the fee permit season. Anglers are required to buy a daily permit (\$3.50 plus \$.50 issuance fee) in addition to the applicable resident or non-resident license. Trout licenses are not required to fish in the areas during the fee permit season, but they are required during the non-permit period of the year. No fishing is permitted in any fee fishing area for five days preceding the opening day (1st Saturday in April). Fishing shall begin at 9:00 a.m. on opening day at all fee areas. After opening day, fishing times will be as posted. The daily creel limit is 6 trout. Fishermen are required to use separate stringers. Bait or artificial lures may be used as posted. Children-only fishing area (where applicable) regulations are posted.

Big Tumbling Creek: Area includes Big Tumbling Creek within the Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area. A daily permit is required from the first Saturday in April through September 30. Directions: From Saltville, VA turn left off of Rt. 107 onto Rt. 91 (1/4 mile); then right onto Rt. 634; bear left onto Rt. 613 and proceed 3.5 miles; then right onto Rt. 747 to the area.

Crooked Creek: Area is located within the Crooked Creek Wildlife Management Area in Carroll County. A daily permit is required from the first Saturday in April through September 30. Directions: From Galax, VA take Rt. 58 east to Woodlawn, VA; then take Rt. 620 south approximately 4.0 miles to the area.

Douthat State Park: Area includes Douthat State Park Lake and Wilson Creek above the lake to the park boundary and downstream to the lower USFS boundary. A daily permit is required from the first Saturday in April through June 15 and from September 15 through October 31. A children-only area is provided. Also, children 12 years and under can fish without a permit in the entire area if under the direct supervision of a permitted adult and the combined creel limit for both adult and child/children does not exceed 6 trout. Directions: Located 7 miles north of Clifton Forge, VA on Rt. 629 which can be accessed by Exit 27 off of I-64.



2005 Trout Guide

With 2,800 miles of trout streams, rivers and numerous ponds and lakes, it's no wonder why Virginia is a trout angling paradise. Big browns, beautiful rainbow and native brook trout await lucky anglers who want to spend some quality time in the outdoors. But, before you load up that spinning or fly fishing rod you'll want to purchase a copy of the new 2005 Trout Guide. This is the ultimate guide to trout fishing in Virginia and the Department's trout management programs. It's packed with useful information that includes: maps, stocking information, what's new for 2005, special regulation and wild trout streams, license information and much more.

Even if you are a diehard trout angler or just a weekend adventurer this full-color, information-packed, special issue of *Virginia Wildlife* magazine can be yours for just \$2.00. Copies are available by making a check payable to: Treasurer of Virginia, and mailing it to Virginia Wildlife, Special Trout Guide, P.O. Box 11104, Richmond, VA 23230-1104.

Nongame Fish, Reptile, Amphibian, and Aquatic Invertebrate Regulations

General

It shall be unlawful to take, possess, import, cause to be imported, export, cause to be exported, buy, sell, offer for sale or liberate within the Commonwealth any wild animal unless otherwise specifically permitted by law or regulation. Albino reptiles and amphibians and domestic animals may be imported, possessed, and sold. A list of domestic animals and the Department's official listing of "Native and Naturalized Fauna of Virginia" is available from the Richmond and regional offices.

Native and Naturalized Species Possession Limits:

Amphibians and Reptiles—5

Nongame Fish and Aquatic Invertebrates—20

Exceptions:

1. Threatened and endangered species—no take
2. Carp, bowfin, longnose gar, mullet, yellow bullhead, brown bullhead, black bullhead, snail bullhead, white sucker, northern hogsucker, gizzard shad, threadfin shad, white perch, yellow perch, alewife and blueback herring [see limits under Anadromous (coastal) in table on page 13], stoneroller (hornyhead), fathead minnow, golden shiner, and goldfish—unlimited
3. See page 13 for catfish below the fall line and anadromous (coastal) shad and herring.
4. Fish bait: minnows and chubs (Cyprinidae), salamanders, crayfish, and hellgrammites—50 in aggregate unless said person has purchased fish bait and has a receipt specifying the number of individuals purchased by species. Note: Madtoms and salamanders cannot be bought or sold
5. Bullfrogs and snapping turtles*—15 per day
*Cannot be taken from the banks or waters of designated stocked trout waters. Taking bullfrogs with a gig or bow and arrow requires a hunting license. Taking turtles by hook and line requires a fishing license.

Methods to Capture or Take

General Methods:

Except as provided for under "Other Methods" and except in any waters where the use of nets is prohibited, the species listed in the previous section (Native and Naturalized Species—Possession Limits) may only be taken by hand, hook and line, with a seine not exceeding 4 feet in depth by 10 feet in length, an umbrella type net not exceeding 5 by 5 feet square, small minnow traps with throat openings no larger than 1 inch in diameter, cast nets, and handheld bow nets with diameter not to exceed 20 inches and handle length not to exceed 8 feet. Bullfrogs may also be taken by gigging or bow and arrow and from private waters by firearms no larger than .22 caliber rimfire.

Other Methods:

Trot Lines, juglines or set poles may be used to take nongame fish and turtles provided they are not baited with live bait (worms are permissible), except on waters stocked with trout and within 600 feet of any dam. Live bait other than game fish may be used on trot lines to take catfish in Carroll, Dickenson, Giles, Grayson, Montgomery, Pulaski and Wythe counties, and in the Clinch River, in Russell, Scott and Wise counties.

Any person setting or possessing the above equipment shall have it clearly marked by permanent means with his or her name, address, and telephone number, and is required to check all lines and remove all fish and animals caught each day.

Bow and Arrow may be used to take carp and gar (fishing license required) during day and night hours (24 hrs.), except from waters stocked with trout. Crossbows, spearguns and poisoned arrows are prohibited.

Snagging, grabbing, snaring, gigging and the use of a striking iron are legal methods to take nongame fish in certain waters in certain counties as follows:

1. In the waters of the following counties (except public impoundments, the Roanoke (Staunton) and Dan Rivers, and those waters stocked by the Department): Amelia, Appomattox, Brunswick, Campbell, Charlotte, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Goochland (except James River), Greensville, Halifax, Louisa, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Pittsylvania, and Prince Edward.
2. From April 1 through May 15 and October 1 through November 30 during the daytime in the following waters: Buchanan County, all waters except Dismal River; Grayson County, New River; Lee County, Powell River; Russell County, Clinch River; Scott County, Clinch River and its tributaries; Tazewell County, Dry Run Creek; Wise County, Clinch River; Washington County, Middle Fork and South Fork of the Holston rivers. Creel limit: 20 suckers per day.
3. Noosing suckers (daytime only) from December 1 through February 28 in Highland County.
4. Snagging for carp and suckers during April in Wolf and Big Walkers Creek in Giles County.
5. Snagging for carp and suckers in Walkers Creek, Wolf Creek and the North Fork of the Holston in Bland County.
6. Bow and arrow and gigging for carp year round in the Shenandoah River.
7. Shooting with a rifle for suckers and carp from April 15 to May 31 during daylight hours in the shoals of the Clinch River within the limits of Scott County except, that it shall be unlawful to shoot fish on Sunday or within the limits of any town, or from any bridge. Fishing license is required. Creel limit: 20 per day.

Dip nets may be used to take shad, herring, mullet and suckers except in designated stocked trout waters, Department-owned or controlled lakes, in certain waters where anadromous shad and herring can not be possessed (see pages 12 & 13), and as restricted below. The user and all helpers (regardless of age) must have dip net permits (\$3.50) or valid fishing license. Permits are valid in the

county's inland waters for which issued. All other fish species taken are to be immediately returned to the water alive.

Herring: Commercial herring dipping is prohibited in Diascund Creek in New Kent County and in Ward's, Chippokes, and Powell's Creek north of State Hwy. 10.

Suckers:

Limit of 20 per day.

Season: February 15- May 15.

Dip nets shall not be more than 6 feet square. Dip net permits are not required for taking suckers in Brunswick, Greenville and Sussex counties.

Nets and Seines are prohibited while fishing in designated stocked trout waters and for taking fish from Department-owned or controlled lakes (except as otherwise posted). Only those nets and seines listed under general methods to capture or take nongame fish (above) can be used in the public waters of the Roanoke (Staunton) and Dan Rivers in Campbell, Charlotte, Halifax and Pittsylvania counties, and in the City of Danville. Seines, nets, and traps are also prohibited in Lick Creek in Smyth and Bland counties, Bear Creek in Smyth County, Laurel Creek in Tazewell and Bland counties, and Hungry Mother Creek above Hungry Mother Lake in Smyth County. However, these restrictions do not prohibit the use of a hand-landing net to land fish legally hooked. Seasons and local restrictions governing the use of nets and seines are complex. Persons deciding to try this type of fishing should consult with the game warden stationed in the area to be fished.

Areas Restricted

Designated Stocked Trout Waters: Nongame fish may be harvested only by hook and line in designated stocked trout waters.

Mollusks: Unlawful to take mussels and the spiny riversnail (*Io fluvialis*) in the Tennessee drainage in Virginia (Clinch, Powell and the North, South and Middle Forks of the Holston rivers and tributaries), and it shall be unlawful to take mussels in the James River and tributaries west of Rt. 29 and in the entire North Fork of the Shenandoah River.

Salamanders: Unlawful to take salamanders in Grayson Highlands State Park and on National Forest lands in the Jefferson National Forest in those portions of Grayson, Smyth and Washington counties bounded on the east by Rt. 16, on the north by Rt. 603 and on the south and west by Rt. 58.

Non-Native (Exotic Animals)

A special permit is required and may be issued by the Department, if consistent with the Department's fish and wildlife management program, to import, possess, or sell the following non-native (exotic) amphibians, fish, mollusks, and reptiles: giant or marine toad, tongueless or African clawed frog, barred tiger salamander, gray tiger salamander, blotched tiger salamander, smallmouth buffalo, bigmouth buffalo, black buffalo, piranhas, bighead carp, grass carp or white amur, red shiner, silver carp, black carp, rudd, tench, ruffe, snakeheads, air-breathing catfish, tilapia, swamp eel, tubenose goby, round goby, zebra mussel, alligators, caimans, brown tree snake, crocodiles, and gavials.

All other non-native (exotic) amphibians, fish, aquatic invertebrates and reptiles not listed above may be possessed, purchased, and sold; provided, that such animals shall be subject to all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations, including those that apply to threatened/endangered species, and further provided, that such animals shall not be liberated within the Commonwealth.

Fish Consumption Advisories

Fishing provides many benefits including food and recreational enjoyment. Many anglers keep, cook and eat their catches. Fish are routinely monitored for contaminants by the Department of Environmental Quality. While the vast majority of the state's waters have no dangerous levels of contaminants, sometimes the fish in certain waters are found to contain potentially harmful levels of chemicals. When this happens, the Department of Health issues warnings for the affected bodies of water. Because the Health Department lowered their PCB advisory level and the list of advisories often changes several times in a given year, VDGIF is no longer going to try and publish a current list in this booklet. For specific, up-to-date fish consumption advisories, please go to the Health Department Web site, www.vdh.virginia.gov/hhcontrol and look under Fish Consumption Advisories or call the Health Department at 804-864-8182.

Anglers should realize that they may still fish these waters and enjoy excellent recreational fishing. Below is a section on cleaning and cooking your fish, which will help reduce contamination levels in fish you eat.

Cleaning and Cooking Your Fish

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and most other organic contaminants usually build up in a fish's fat deposits and just underneath

the skin. By removing the skin and fat before cooking, you can reduce the levels of these chemicals. Mercury collects in the fish's muscle and cannot be reduced by cleaning and cooking methods. To reduce PCBs and other organics in your fish, consider cleaning and cooking your fish as described below.

- Remove all skin.
- Trim off all the fat, especially the belly flap, along the lateral line on each side of the fish, along the back, and under the skin.
- Bake or broil trimmed fish on a rack or grill. Cooking does not destroy the contaminants in fish, but heat from cooking melts some of the fat in the fish and allows some of the contaminated fat to drip away.
- Discard any drippings. Do not eat them or use them for cooking other foods or for preparing sauces or gravies.

IMPORTANT: The meal advice included in this information is based on fish that have been skinned, trimmed, and cooked properly.

Also remember that larger and older fish tend to collect more contaminants, and fatty fish (such as channel catfish and carp) tend to collect PCBs and other organic chemicals. Eating smaller, younger fish and avoiding fatty species can help limit your exposure. Your exposure depends not only on the contaminant levels in the fish, but also the amount of fish you eat.